

At Any Cost by emnorth2002

Disclaimer: The basic premise and characters belong to lots of people who aren't me.

Spoilers: Everything up to and *including* Order of the Phoenix

Summary: Draco will do anything to make Hermione his.

Draco smiled in satisfaction as he entered his bedroom and saw Hermione asleep in his bed. It wasn't her habit to be asleep this late in the day, but he had been wearing her out lately, Draco remembered with a smirk. Poor thing needed her rest. Besides, he could hardly object to the sight of her fast asleep and naked in his bed. She looked so lovely when she slept: sweet and innocent and vulnerably soft. The sight of her sleeping never failed to arouse him. Of course, so did the sight of her laughing, smiling, screaming, arguing, breathing. Every facet of her personality and every expression she possessed held a unique charm to allure him. Whether she needed her sleep or not, she'd be awakened soon. He needed her again.

He kicked off his shoes as he crossed the room, climbing up onto the bed to lie beside her. Running his fingers through her curly hair with a gentleness that would have surprised most who knew him, he covered her face with tiny kisses as he waited for her to wake up. He didn't have long to wait. His smile grew wider as her eyes first blinked open and then slid closed again as she pulled him in for a long, sweet kiss. Draco purred in pleasure as he wrapped his arms around her naked form, pulling her closer as he slid his body on top of hers. His eyes closed in satisfaction at the feel of her body pressed full length against his.

Draco had had a truly hellish day, and the only thing that had gotten him through it with his sanity intact was the knowledge that once it was over, he could come home to Hermione. He deepened the kiss, running his hands up and down her beautiful body, the way he had been longing to all day long. He inhaled deeply, savoring her scent and flavor and the feel of her in his arms. The reality of her soundly beat even the best of his fantasies. He felt the tension in his body finally drain away as he melted into the warmth of Hermione's touch. Being with her made everything else disappear. Gods, she felt incredible. He loved her so much.

It had not been easy or comfortable, falling in love with a member of the Golden Gryffindor Trio. He certainly hadn't *planned* for it to happen. It went against everything he had been raised to believe in to form an attachment to a muggle-born witch, and the fact that she was Potter's best friend just made it more difficult. For their first five years at Hogwarts, he barely even realized she was female. He didn't see her as an individual, merely as an extension of Potter the Prat. As such, he had taunted and insulted her at every opportunity without even noticing her. His sudden revelation that she was a thoroughly desirable woman was all the more painful and overwhelming for being totally unexpected.

FLASHBACK: Sixth Year

The spell he had used on the prefect's bathroom portrait was not found in the Hogwarts curriculum. It wasn't exactly a Dark Arts spell, but it didn't exactly have the best reputation. After all, a spell that would force open doors, even doors that were magically protected by portraits to only open with passwords, was not exactly something that every young student was supposed to know. But as captain (thanks to his father's liberal donations), Draco had been in charge of the Slytherin Quidditch tryouts, and they had gone disastrously. Though they had started fairly early in the evening, it had been long after dark before they were finished. Draco was hot, sweaty, muddy, and thoroughly annoyed. He needed a good, long soak to loosen up his muscles and calm him down, and he had no intention of waiting for the portrait subject to get back from wherever he had gallivanted off to before Draco could get in to the bathroom.

He entered the room quickly and came almost immediately to a dead halt. The years he had spent thinking of Granger as a genderless annoyance ended in that single moment. The sight of her in the bathtub left his mouth dry, his knees weak, and his perception of her permanently altered. Her beauty alone, blatantly displayed in the clear, oil scented but bubble-free bathtub, would have caught his attention. Hidden beneath her prim, baggy robes was an unquestionably delectable body. She had obviously started her development fairly early, for her body was that of a fully formed woman. Every inch of her was soft and curved and purely feminine. It was mouth-watering. But her body, beautiful as it was, was not what held him immobile with shock.

Spread out in the bathtub with steam floating around her, one hand between her widely spread thighs, the other on her breasts, and her head thrown back in ecstasy, the sight of her pleasuring herself was the most erotic thing Draco had ever seen. She wasn't the first girl he had watched masturbate. Bred at an early age to use women for pleasure whenever the opportunity arose, there was very little of a sexual nature that Draco hadn't experienced, at one point or another. Watching his partners get themselves off had always been a particular fetish of his. There was certainly nothing unique or shocking in what Hermione was doing. He had seen much more beautiful women fingering themselves with far more skill and expertise. But nothing had ever enticed him as much as Hermione, at that moment.

That fierce determination that she brought to her studies and her friendships was reflected here as well. Draco, accustomed to seeing women perform this task merely to entice him, was taken aback by the sheer aggressiveness she showed. There was nothing soft or tentative in her movements as she forcefully worked her fingers inside her pussy, pushing hard to achieve climax. She was as single-mindedly engrossed in her own pleasure as he had ever seen her in a book as she concentrated all of her attention on achieving release. There was no shyness or hesitation when she went after what she wanted. Face flushed, eyes tightly clenched shut, body arching so hard that her hips lifted all the way out of the water, she was stunning in her unrestrained hedonism.

Tiredness, soreness, and muscle aches were completely forgotten as Draco watched her. The only pain in his body he was aware of was the insistent throbbing in his cock that only increased the longer he watched. Draco was consumed by the thought of what she'd be like as a lover. He was suddenly convinced she'd be passionate, wild, and uninhibited: a true lioness. It took all his restraint not to rip off his own clothes, dive into the tub, yank her fingers out of her cunt, replace them with his cock, and give her the hard fuck she so obviously craved. After a lifetime of power play fucks, based mostly on balancing power and securing alliances, the thought of engaging in a purely sensual affair; passion for passion's sake with no hidden agenda; was unbearably tempting. He knew he had to have her, no matter what the cost.

Even with the severe shortage of blood flowing in his upper body, Draco was still intelligent enough to know that any chance he'd have of convincing Granger to let him bed her would go right out the window if she knew that he was watching her at that moment. She wasn't the kind of girl who would forgive and forget something like that. She'd be far more likely to hex him into a year in the infirmary. Fortunately, she hadn't opened her eyes since he had walked in, and her own moans had covered the initial sound of his footsteps.

Draco hid himself carefully behind a screen, watching through the divider section as she finally hit her orgasm. The sounds she made as she came were the most beautiful he had ever heard and he bit his lip until it bled to keep from moaning. He watched hungrily as she cleaned herself up, finishing her bath and drying herself off. As soon as the portrait closed behind her, Draco practically dove for the tub that she had vacated, tearing off his clothes and climbing in as the water refilled, careful to turn the knobs for the same bath oils Hermione had used: lavender and rose. His hand worked feverishly on his erection as he had the fastest, hottest, most mind-blowing wank of his life with his eyes firmly shut and the image of Hermione in his mind. He came so hard he was boneless for twenty minutes afterwards. When he finally managed to pull himself together and get back to the Slytherin common room, he ignored all the students who crowded around him, wanting to talk about the Quidditch tryouts, and headed straight to his bed. For the rest of the night, all night long, all he thought and dreamt of was Hermione.

He started his campaign to win her the very next day. Getting a girl's attention when you had massive amounts of experience, a well-developed imagination, and an endless budget was not a difficult thing to do. The direct, frontal attack wouldn't work in this case since she was already so biased against him. He'd have to come at it from a different angle. The secret admirer ploy was a bit cliché, but it had never failed to yield results. Every day, he sent her an anonymous owl with a gift attached and a note, saying how badly he wanted to please her. If he played his cards right, he was sure that she'd be so entranced by her secret admirer that she'd still want him, even when his identity was revealed.

The gifts were general at first; chocolates, roses, books of poetry, etc.; but as the weeks passed and he watched her closely (obsessively) he became aware of the majority of

her tastes and preferences, and the gifts grew more specific. He watched with pleasure as Hermione blushed and smiled over a package Godiva chocolate, specially ordered from the muggle world after he heard her mention that it was her favorite. He replayed endlessly in his mind her squeal of delight when she opened the package holding the out-of-print book on the history of house elves that he knew she had been searching for. And he smirked in satisfaction every time he saw her wear the necklace he had bought her, knowing how much she loved sapphires.

At first, he told himself that he watched her just so he could find out what gifts would most effectively seduce her. Girls, he had discovered from long experience, were rather like nifflers. Wave something shiny in their faces and they'll follow you anywhere and do anything. But the more time that passed, the more he was forced to admit to himself that watching her was more than just a means to an end. He watched her because he wanted to watch her, because he craved her, because he became irritable and moody if he went more than a few hours without seeing her, because the only time that he could relax was when he was near her. His plans for her consumed his thoughts as he fantasized night and day about what it would be like when she finally gave herself to him.

For the first time that he could remember, Draco Malfoy was falling in love. It was a rather dark, obsessive kind of love, but it was love, nonetheless. His desire grew even more intense as he realized he was attracted not only to her lovely body and aggressive sexual drive, but also her keen mind, her sharp sense of humor, her fierce loyalty, uncompromising honor, blinding determination and stubborn will.

Unfortunately, that keen mind that he so admired nearly proved his undoing. He knew that she investigated her gifts, trying to find out the identity of her secret admirer, but he had never expected her to discover the truth so quickly. One morning when he showed up at the Owlery just before dawn, as usual, to attach his gift to an owl, she stepped out of the shadows to confront him.

"Why not save time and hand it to me now?"

Draco, for the first time in his life, stammered. "W-w-what?"

"The gift," she said, pointing to the owl. "What is it this time? More chocolates? Flowers? Another piece of jewelry? The answers to next year's N.E.W.T.s? What have you pulled out of your wizard's hat this time to impress me, hmm?"

"I d-don't know what you're talking about," Draco managed to choke out. Damn it, how had this happened? She wasn't ready to accept him yet; it was too early! Revealing himself at this stage could ruin everything.

Frantically trying to figure out how to deal with the situation, Draco barely noticed when she pulled out her wand, and by the time he realized she had cast the Accio charm, it was too late to stop it. The package sailed across the room and landed neatly in her

hand. She opened the package that was neatly addressed to her, cast a perfunctory glance at the recording of a wizarding opera she had expressed interest in, and scanned her eyes over the attached note. Her hands, still holding the package and the note, dropped to her sides and her eyes focused on the floor as she made an obvious attempt to hold in her temper.

"I don't appreciate being played, Malfoy," she said in a quiet, intensely bitter voice.

"Hermione, no! I wasn't."

"Don't call me Hermione," she hissed, looking up at last.

"But it's your name, isn't it?" he asked, bewildered.

"It's what my friends and family call me, yes. But you're neither. Why not stick to calling me Mudblood? You used to like that name so much."

"I haven't called you that all year," he protested.

"No, you haven't. Instead, you've been following me around like some kind of stalker; and don't insult my intelligence by attempting to pretend that you haven't been sending me lavish gifts that are supposedly from some secret admirer, and what? What's the payoff here, Malfoy? Were you going to string me along with the secret admirer ploy until I thought I'd fallen in love and then humiliate me in front of the entire school? Is this your idea of a joke: to make me think that someone actually wanted me and then prove me wrong?"

"No! I'd never!"

"Don't tell me you'd never do something like that, because we both know that's not true. You've taken advantage of every single opportunity for the past five and a half years to torture my friends. I always thought that I could deal with it, that I could take anything you threw our way, but this time you've gone too far. If you want to prove to me how undesirable I am, you can bloody well do it to my face instead of sneaking around with all this secret admirer tosh. I'd have thought that something this underhanded would be beneath even you, but apparently, I was wrong. Congratulations Malfoy, you're even lower than I thought." With that, she stormed out of the Owlery, or tried to.

"Hermione Granger stop!" Draco shouted as he dashed after her, catching her before she could reach the door. He grabbed her hands before she could go for her wand, pinning them against the wall. She struggling as best she could, but he was much stronger than her, and was far more interested in holding on to her than caring whether or not she kicked him and stomped on his feet.

"Get your hands off me," she spat.

“Not until you hear me out,” he insisted, tightening his grip on her wrists. He pressed his body against hers to limit the range of her kicks and hoped to high heaven that she couldn’t feel how aroused it made him to be so close to her. The fact that she was squirming wildly against his body and that she looked bloody beautiful when her eyes were flashing like that didn’t help either.

“Say what you need to say and then let me go,” she ground out between clenched teeth.

“It wasn’t a game. None of it,” he whispered, trying to make her look at him. She resolutely avoided his eyes.

“Add a few tears and some cheesy violin music,” Hermione bit out sarcastically. “That’ll make it even more believable.”

“I meant every word that I said in those letters,” Draco tried again.

“Yes, because you have such a history of being honest and sincere when it comes to dealing with Gryffindors.”

“Why do you refuse to listen to me?” he shouted, losing his temper at her stubbornness.

Finally, she looked him in the eye. “Why on earth should I believe you? After all these years of hating me, you expect me to believe that you just woke up one morning and decided you liked me?”

[One night, actually,] Draco thought to himself, but had the good sense not to say aloud.

“Every year,” Hermione continued, “you’ve had some new ploy to make our lives miserable. So, when I start getting all sorts of manipulative gifts from you, what am I supposed to think? Will I believe that you’ve decided, for no particular reason, to turn over a new leaf? Or will I come to the conclusion that this is just another trick? You’re not stupid, Malfoy. You’re cruel, but not stupid. You do the math.”

She was right, of course. That was why he had wanted to wait a while longer before revealing himself to her. If he had had more time, then maybe he could have slowly, gradually changed his behavior toward her so it wasn’t such a shock when he revealed himself. As it was, it was too soon. Far too soon. The fact that she had found him out made her even less likely to trust him than before he had started the whole mess.

“What do I have to do to make you believe me?” he pleaded, almost in despair.

“Become someone I can trust,” she snapped. The answer startled Draco so much that he released her wrists. Latching on to the opportunity, Hermione immediately pulled away and ran out the door.

Draco didn't move for over an hour. He just stood there in the Owlery, thinking about what Hermione had said. When he finally moved, he headed straight for the Headmaster's office and pounded on the door until someone let him in. He explained to Dumbledore that he had been initiated as a Death Eater the previous summer, and that he wanted to use his position in Voldemort's ranks to spy for the Dumbledore. Dumbledore, though surprised, accepted.

END FLASHBACK

Draco purred as he leant into Hermione's touch while she eagerly unfastened his robes and pulled them away. Soon he was naked and her legs were wrapped around his waist, hips thrusting against his as she begged him to enter her. He smirked with unrestrained pride at the sound of her begging, but the smirk shifted into a groan as he slid inside her and felt her muscles close around him. Gods, how could any human woman feel so divinely *perfect*?

Hermione attached her lips to his neck, moving them up and down as she sucked and nipped at the soft skin. She found a sensitive spot just along his hairline and attacked it with her tongue, smiling in satisfaction when he moaned. She didn't notice the way he tensed up.

[I didn't teach her that,] he thought to himself, [which means she must have learned it from him.] Draco bit back a growl. He hated being reminded that he hadn't been her first lover. He cursed himself for the thousandth time for going through with the secret admirer ploy. If he had gone straight to Dumbledore and offered himself as a spy in the first place, he could have earned Hermione's trust much sooner, and maybe she never would have ended up in someone else's arms. He closed his eyes as he forced the thought away. Hermione was here now, with him, and that was all that mattered. He wouldn't think about her former lover anymore.

FLASHBACK: Seventh Year

Draco proved his worth as a spy for all of second term of his sixth year, and by the summer before seventh year, Dumbledore trusted him completely. Draco worked hard at it, using all the cunning he had accumulated over the years as a Slytherin and a Malfoy to find out every possible scrap of information. He felt no guilt about betraying Death Eaters. Malfoys always looked out for their own interests, and at the moment, the only thing that interested him was Hermione. He knew that if his father discovered he was spying for Dumbledore, Lucius would turn him over to Voldemort without hesitation, to earn the Dark Lord's favor. He had no trouble justifying to himself betraying everyone he had known all his life in order to win Hermione's favor.

His big break came midway through the summer when he was able to warn Dumbledore about a planned attack on Diagon Alley. The Death Eaters were hoping that the raid on the popular wizarding center would be a major blow to morale, and that it would teach the wizarding world both how very vulnerable they were to attack, and

how incapable the Ministry was of protecting them. Thanks to the advance warning, Dumbledore was able to turn the attack back on the Death Eaters, protecting everyone in Diagon Alley and actually catching many Death Eaters for trial.

Dumbledore invited Draco to Grimmauld Place for the celebration feast. It was the first time Draco had been to the Order headquarters, and he was almost painfully excited. Up till then, no one but Dumbledore had known Draco's position as a spy. At this dinner, it would be announced to the entire order, included Hermione, who was staying at Grimmauld Place over the summer. Draco didn't care about the praise he got from Dumbledore when he was introduced to the Order. He didn't care about the lives of the people in Diagon Alley that he had saved, or the fact that he had helped arrange a resounding defeat for the Death Eaters. But he cared very much for the way that Hermione's eyes lit up with surprise and appreciation when she heard what he had done. In the bustle before they sat down to dinner, he managed to pull her aside for a moment.

"Have I become someone you can trust?" he whispered, still holding her hand that he had grabbed when he asked if he could talk to her for a minute. It was soft and warm and trembled slightly in his; he never wanted to let it go.

"I-I'm sorry for what I said," she whispered in reply.

"Don't be," he answered. "It was after you left that I went to Dumbledore and told him I wanted to be a spy for the Order. It's because of you that I wanted to be someone who could be trusted."



"I do trust you," she said softly, looking into his eyes at last, "Draco." She smiled at him shyly as she emphasized her use of his first name. It was the first time she had ever called him that and he couldn't help the grin that spread over his face at the sound of it.

"I'm glad Hermione."

"Hermione?" a voice called from behind Draco. "Oh, there you are, love. Best come on, both of you. Dinner's already on the table." Hermione's face lit up and she pulled her hand out of Draco's without a second thought, moving toward the person who had come to take her away.

Potter. Harry sodding Potter, the Boy Who Lived to Ruin Draco's Life. A few discreet questions gave Draco all the answers he needed. At the beginning of the summer, Potter had finally pulled his head out of his arse and realized that Hermione was the most desirable woman in the world. They had been together for over a month. As Draco watched them during dinner, he picked up on something else, something that no one had told him. They were lovers. It was obvious in the way that they touched, the way they responded to each other, the way that they looked at each other as if they couldn't wait for dinner to be over so they could run upstairs and tear each other's clothes off. It was with enormous difficulty that Draco suppressed the urge to growl.

Hermione was the only thing in Draco's life that he had ever truly wanted. What had started out as simple desire had escalated into an overwhelming obsession. He knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that he'd do anything to have her. She was the only thing on earth that he valued, outside of himself, and he'd knock down without hesitation or guilt any barriers that stood between them. He'd already given up his pureblood beliefs and prejudices for her, without regrets. He'd been willing to join the Order for her. If she had consented to be his, he'd have fought for the Light Side with everything he had, just to keep her. But after everything he had done and everything he had sacrificed, she would still rather be with someone else than be with him. Well, if she wouldn't come to him willingly, then he'd have to put her in a position where she had no choice. He would have her, one way or another.

That night, he stayed at Grimmauld Place long enough to see Potter and Hermione stammer out weak excuses to go upstairs together which the rest of the group accepted with a variety of winks and nudges, pleased to see their hero so happy with his girl. Draco excused himself discreetly and followed them silently, trailing after them up the stairs and cracking the doorway open ever so slightly. Even though he had been expected it, the sight of Hermione wrapping her arms around Potter while he kissed her hungrily and slid his hands under her shirt was nearly enough to make Draco vomit. When Potter pulled his mouth away from hers and started sucking on her neck and Hermione gasped out that she loved him, Draco decided he had heard enough. Rage coursed through his veins as he stormed out of the house and apparated himself away, directly into Voldemort's lair.

He told Voldemort that he had infiltrated the Order with the sole intention of serving as an inside spy. Draco knew that Voldemort didn't believe his invented story of unshakeable loyalty to the dark cause, but the Dark Lord pretended to be convinced, praising him for his initiative, and promising him advancement within the Death Eater corps and his pick of prizes when the war was over. In his years as a dark leader, Voldemort had seen countless wizards like Draco who had tried to get what they wanted in the legitimate world and had turned to the dark arts when they realized they couldn't get their heart's desire any other way. With a knowing gleam in his eye, he asked Draco what he would like as his reward. His suspicions were confirmed when he saw the flash in Draco's eye as he answered.

"Potter's mudblood, Granger" he answered without hesitation. "I want her untouched, undamaged, to be mine: permanently, unrestrictedly, and without interference"

"Granted," Voldemort answered easily. "She'll be yours."

"Then I'll be yours," Draco replied, rising gracefully to his feet.

And he was.

The final battle at the end of seventh year was arranged with particular care, with Draco pulling all of the strings. He coordinated the attacks and the responses so that all the members of the Order would be scattered around Hogwarts, away from the true fight. So, while Dumbledore battled it out in the Great Hall and various and assorted Weasleys dealt with the Death Eaters attacking from the Quidditch pitch, Draco, Voldemort, Potter, and Hermione faced off in the Astronomy Tower. Potter and Hermione stood with their wands pointed at Voldemort, convinced that this would be their moment of victory. They were, therefore, completely caught off guard when Draco rounded on the pair of them and hit Hermione with a stunning spell.

Quidditch reflexes kicked in and he managed to catch her body before it hit the ground. Cradling her in his arms, he pulled her into a corner of the room and cast a shielding spell around them so they would not be affected by the duel raging around them. For the next quarter of an hour, he alternated between caressing Hermione and watching with hungry eyes as his rival faced his defeat.

The most anticipated duel of the century was actually far less interesting than Draco had expected. Potter was fighting nowhere near his actual ability since so much of his concentration was focused on worrying about Hermione. With his opponent so distracted, Voldemort managed to finish him off in fairly quick order. When Potter lay dead at his feet, Draco dissolved his protective barrier and stood in front of Voldemort with Hermione still wrapped protectively in his arms.

"I see you've claimed your prize," Voldemort stated, amusement coloring his voice.

"Any objections, my Lord?"

"None whatsoever. You've done everything you said you would, and have earned your reward. You are, of course, welcome to stay and join in the celebration, if you'd like."

"Thank you, my Lord, but I would rather return home for the time being."

"I imagined you'd say that," Voldemort replied with a smirk. "Very well then, Draco. I'll give you a week to play with your new toy before I'll expect you back at headquarters. You may go now."

"Thank you, my Lord," Draco answered, bowing deeply before activating his portkey back to Malfoy Manor, where he carried Hermione up to his room, stripped off all of her clothes, and attached her, by means of magical restraints, to his bed. And that was where she had stayed, ever since.

END FLASHBACK

His stubborn little Gryffindor had been difficult to break, Draco remembered as he thrust repeatedly into her warmth. When she had woken up that first night in his bed, she had screamed to high heaven, fighting him with everything that she had. No matter how

many times he told her that he loved her, that he only wanted to be with her, that she belonged to him, and that he would never give her up, she still fought against him, forcing him to take sterner measures. He would never hurt her, but he *would* possess her, using any means at his disposal. The sooner she learned that he wouldn't take no for an answer, the better, for both of them.

The first time he used the Imperius curse on her, she threw it off. Undaunted, he cast it again. Again, she threw it off. So, he cast it again. And again. And again. He laced her food and water with a subtle potion that would weaken her will and lower her resistance, and still she fought against him. (In the present, Draco smiled as his hand drifted down to her clit, rubbing it gently and delighting in her response. He loved her passion, once it was properly directed.) Once she realized her food was being drugged, she refused to eat, but by then it was too late. The poison had already infiltrated her system, and the fact that she wasn't eating made her even weaker and less able to fight. She was no longer able to completely throw off the Imperius curse, but she retained enough strength and determination to throw off some of it. She submitted to him, but not completely. Even that was an enormous strain for her, and she had given up talking entirely, conserving her energy to fight the curse.

He had not been able to break her completely in the week that Voldemort had given him, but he had managed to make enough progress so that he was (barely) willing to leave her for a few hours a day. Voldemort showed surprising understanding in allowing him to spend as little time as possible in the Death Eater headquarters. He understood that the girl was the only reason Draco had been on his side in the first place. Voldemort was intelligent to know that if anything happened to Draco's pet while Draco was away from her, Draco would go to the ends of the earth to make Voldemort pay, and Draco was too valuable an ally to be an enemy.

The first real break-through had come three days ago, after Draco had had her for twenty-two days. For the first time, she submitted completely to the Imperius curse. He had made love to her that night for the first time, exploring and enjoying her for hours on end. When the sun started to rise and he lay, sweaty and spent in her arms, he pushed the curse to force her to speak for the first time all week.

"Say it," he had whispered to her. "Tell me what you know I want to hear."

"I love you, Draco," she had replied. He rewarded her with a passionate kiss that soon had him taking her all over again.

In the days since then, he had refined his control over her. Good food had restored her to her former strength and energy, but his firm control over her mind kept her from ever getting out of hand. Slowly but carefully, he worked on her memories, forcing her to forget Potter, forget the years she had spent hating Draco, forget the way he had supposedly "betrayed" her. It was a delicate process. He wanted all of Hermione, not just her body, which meant that he couldn't erase or damage any of the things that

made her into the stubborn, forceful, willful witch he had fallen in love with. He just had to delete everything that told her that she didn't love him.

It was working quite nicely, Draco decided as she screamed out her orgasm, her cunt clamping down on him in a vise-like grip, drawing him into his own release. She was starting to respond to him without him having to use the curse to force her. On occasion, she had even kissed him without him telling her to. If he was patient, he would finally have everything he had ever wanted. He was already so incredibly, blissfully, wonderfully close.

"Say it, Hermione," he whispered. "Say it."

"I love you, Draco," she answered. "Only you. I love you."

He sighed contently as he buried his face in her neck. She said it at first because he forced her to. Now she said it because he had trained her to. And once he finished modifying her memories and arranging her thoughts, she'd say it because she believed it, because she felt it, because she loved him as much as he loved her. He was convinced he could make it happen. He loved her, and he would make sure that she loved him back.

At any cost.

THE END